

Remarks

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated **February 22, 2008**. Claims 1-35 are pending in this application. Claims 1-21 and 30-35 have been withdrawn from consideration. The Office Action rejected claims 22 and 24 under 35 USC § 102 over Shekalim (US 6971813); rejected claims 23, 25 and 26 under 35 USC § 103 over Shekalim in view of Shibata (JP 11-111423); and rejected claims 27-29 under 35 USC § 103 over Shekalim in view of Kirk Othmer (NPL).

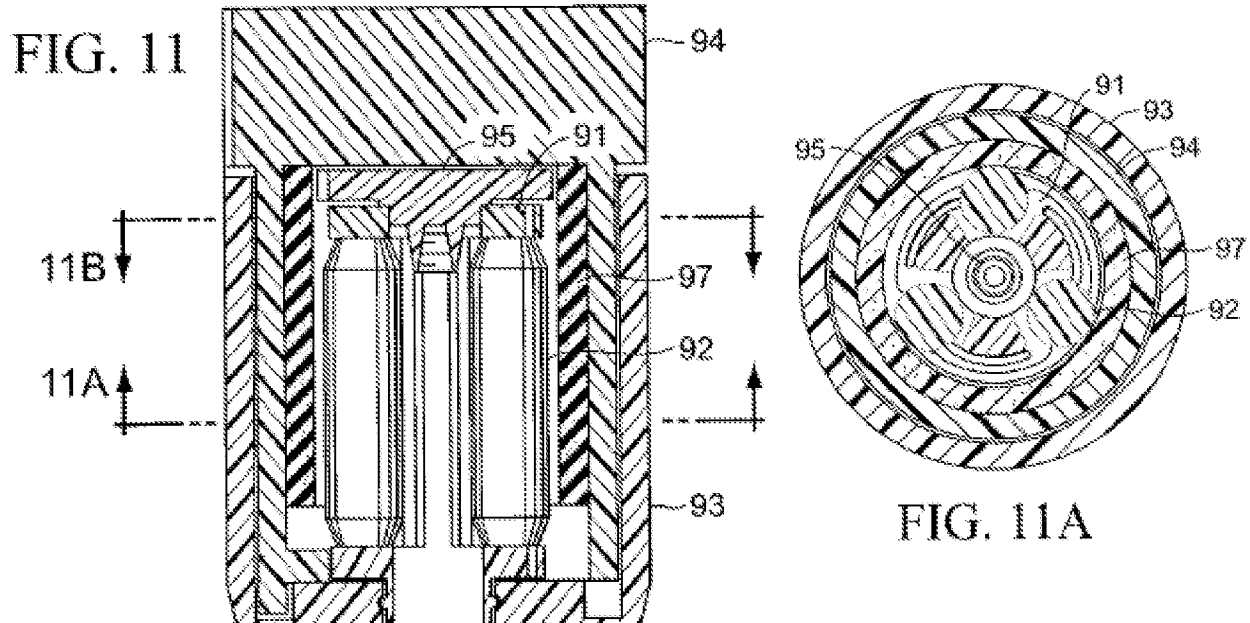
By this Amendment, claims 17, 21 and 22 are amended, claims 36-38 are added and claims 1-16, 18 and 30-35 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute any cancelled subject matter in a subsequent patent application claiming priority to the immediate application. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §§ 102 & 103

The rejections presented in the Office Action are traversed. Applicants assert that Shekalim does not disclose or suggest a device that meets each limitation of independent claim 22.

Claim 22 recites a coating system comprising a coating material source, a first roller and a second roller. Claim 22 further requires that the first roller be “situated relative to the coating material source so that the coating material in the coating material source is transferred to the first roller surface.”

Shekalim teaches a device for coating a stent 99 wherein rollers 92 transfer coating material from a sponge cartridge 97 to the stent 99. See excerpts from Figures 11 and 11A, provided below, and column 11, lines 53-58.



The Office Action asserts that Shekalim teaches a stent 99 (centrally located in the above Figures), a first roller member 97, a second roller member 92, and a coating material source. See Office Action at page 2. No reference character was provided for the “coating material source.”

Shekalim teaches that a user “soaks or prepares the sponge cartridge 97 which acts as a reservoir for the coating material to be applied to the stent 99.” The sponge cartridge 97 is then positioned into a sponge holder 94 and placed into the coating device. See column 11, lines 30-35. Thus, Shekalim teaches that within the assembled device, the sponge cartridge 97 acts as a reservoir/coating material source.

With respect to the Office Action’s characterization of Shekalim, if the sponge cartridge 97 is characterized as the claimed “first roller,” the device would not include a “coating material source” as separately recited in claim 22. Further, because there would be no coating material source that forms a part of the device (e.g. the source might be a separate reservoir into which the sponge cartridge 97 is dipped by a user), the sponge cartridge 97 would not meet the requirement in claim 22 that the first roller be “situated relative to the coating material source so that the coating material in the coating material source is transferred to the first roller surface” when the first and second rollers are situated with respect to one another as required by claim 22.

Alternatively, if the sponge cartridge 97 is considered the “coating material

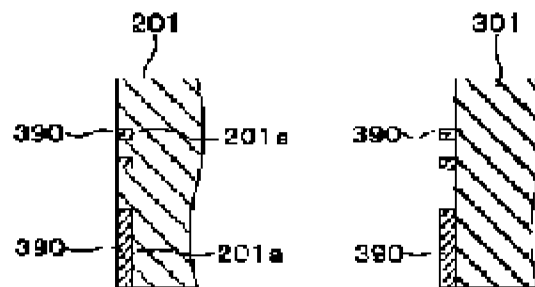
source” recited in claim 22, then each roller 92 would be considered a claimed “first roller,” and Shekalim does not disclose or suggest a “second roller” as recited in claim 22.

Therefore, Applicants assert that Shekalim does not disclose or suggest each limitation of independent claim 22, and claim 22 is patentable over Shekalim under 35 USC § 102. Claim 24 depends from claim 22 and is patentable over Shekalim for at least the reasons discussed with respect to claim 22. Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 USC § 102.

With respect to the rejections under 35 USC § 103, the Office Action asserts that the secondary references teach limitations from various dependent claims; however, the secondary references would not motivate a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the Shekalim device in a way that would meet the limitations of independent claim 22. Therefore, Applicants assert that the rejected dependent claims are patentable over Shekalim in view of Shibata and Shekalim in view of Kirk Othmer, and request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 USC § 103.

Further with respect to the Shibata reference, the Office Action asserts Shibata teaches a first roller 201 and a second roller 301, and states that the surface of the second roller is rougher than the surface of the first roller “because the surface of the second roller has protrusions thereon as illustrated in Fig. 4.” See Office Action at page 4. This assertion is traversed.

Figure 4 shows two rollers, however, the “second roller” 301 as characterized by the Office Action does not include protrusions. Reference character 390 refers to the conductive paste [coating material] that is being applied by the roller. Thus, it appears that Shibata teaches grooves 201a in the first roller, and that conductive paste 390 oriented in the grooves 201a is transferred to the outer surface of the second roller 301. From Figure 4, provided below, the outer surface of the second roller appears smooth.



Thus, Shibata teaches a device wherein the first roller is rougher than the second roller, and not vice versa as required by dependent claim 23.

Applicants further assert that Shibata is non-analogous art, as previously asserted in the Response filed December 3, 2007.

Withdrawn Claims

Withdrawn claims 17 and 21 have been amended herein to depend from independent claim 22. Dependent claims 19 and 20 depend from claim 17. Thus, withdrawn claims 17 and 19-21 now depend from independent claim 22, currently under examination. These claims are consistent with the elected species. Accordingly, Applicants request reinstatement and examination of claims 17 and 19-21.

Conclusion

Based on at least the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 17, 19-29 and 36-38 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
VIDAS, ARRETT & STEINKRAUS

Date: August 12, 2008

By: /Jeremy G Laabs/
Jeremy G. Laabs
Registration No.: 53170

6640 Shady Oak Dr., Suite 400
Eden Prairie, MN 55344-7834
Telephone: (952) 563-3000
Facsimile: (952) 563-3001